

THE NEW SCHOOL

PARSONS

DESIGN STUDIES (MA)

SCHOOL OF ART AND DESIGN HISTORY AND THEORY

NEW WORK & WORK-IN-PROGRESS BY CORE FACULTY: CLIVE DILNOT, JILLY TRAGANOU & SUSAN YELAVICH

It is traditional for faculty to make announcements about new books when they are published. But for this note about the current work of the core full-time faculty of MA Design Studies (Clive Dilnot, Jilly Traganou and Susan Yelavich) we thought we would present both recent work we have published and details of works in progress. By looking at the larger body of work in this way readers can get a better idea of the complexity and range of the projects we are each engaged with.

CLIVE DILNOT

“I published the book *Design and the Question of History* (written with Tony Fry and Susan C. Stewart) in the fall of 2015. [<http://www.bloomsbury.com/us/design-and-the-question-of-history-9781472521606/>]. But a year before the this text came out, I began to work on two edited volumes linked to the work of an old friend of mine, the design historian and design economist John Heskett who died in Spring 2014. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Heskett] Before his death had been trying to persuade him to re-publish work of his that was now out of print or almost impossible to find, and also to publish some of his unpublished research, both on the global history of making [the very large ms. entitled “Crafts, Commerce and Industry: A Global History of Design”] and on design and economics [the ms. “Design and the Creation of Value”].

After his death I decided to take up the project. This was a much more complex task than I had envisioned. Technical issues made it impossible for the moment to public the large “Crafts, Commerce and Industry” volume, but last July I completed work on first book, an extended reader entitles *John Heskett: History, Design, Economics*, covering Heskett’s work across the last 30 years in design, the history of design, design policy, design and business and

design and economics. The Reader is now in press for publication in June 2016. See <http://www.bloomsbury.com/us/a-john-heskett-reader-9781474221269/>

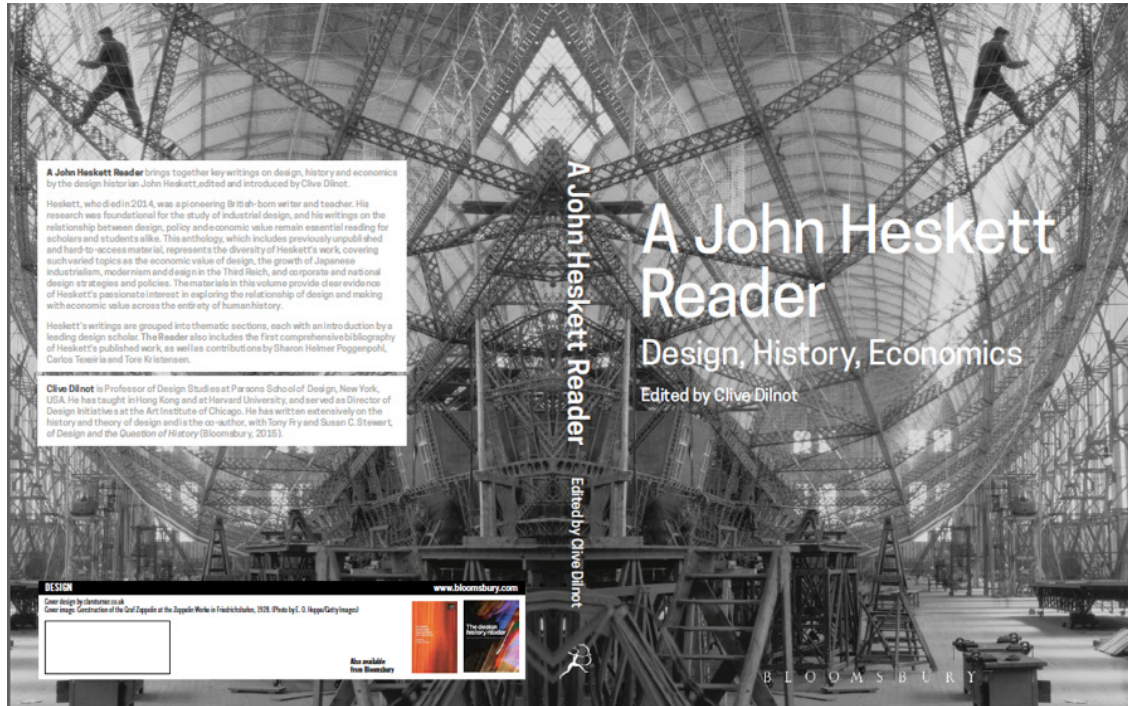


Fig. 1. *John Heskett: History, Design, Economics* (London: Bloomsbury).

The second book, *Design and the Creation of Value*, completed in February, involved bringing to publication an unpublished seminar that Heskett gave for many years, first in Chicago (in the Institute of design in IIT (Illinois Institute of Technology) and then in Hong Kong (The School of Design, Hong Kong Polytechnic University) on the question of the economic value of design. The text is in fact the first to be published that directly confronts design and the history of economic thought. In some deft, brief and very readable chapters Heskett introduces working designers and graduate design students [his audience for all these seminar] to how economic theory and models [Neo-Classical; the Austrian school; Veblen and Institutional theory; New Growth Theory; List and the ‘National Question’] conceptualize value-creation. But these are by no means ‘dead’ or academic analyses. Heskett shows their relevance to thinking design (brought out in summary in the chapter “Design from the Standpoint of Economics”) and then, in a bold move, he reverses the relation and uses the standpoint of design to challenge some of the orthodoxies and limitations of standard economics.

By working in some of Heskett’s other unpublished material on economics I was able to add to these arguments and to complete the book (the ms. was left unfinished) in ways that I hope do justice to his intent. While by no means perfect, the result is a “first text” on design and economics: book that, hopefully, will open a (badly needed) debate around these areas.

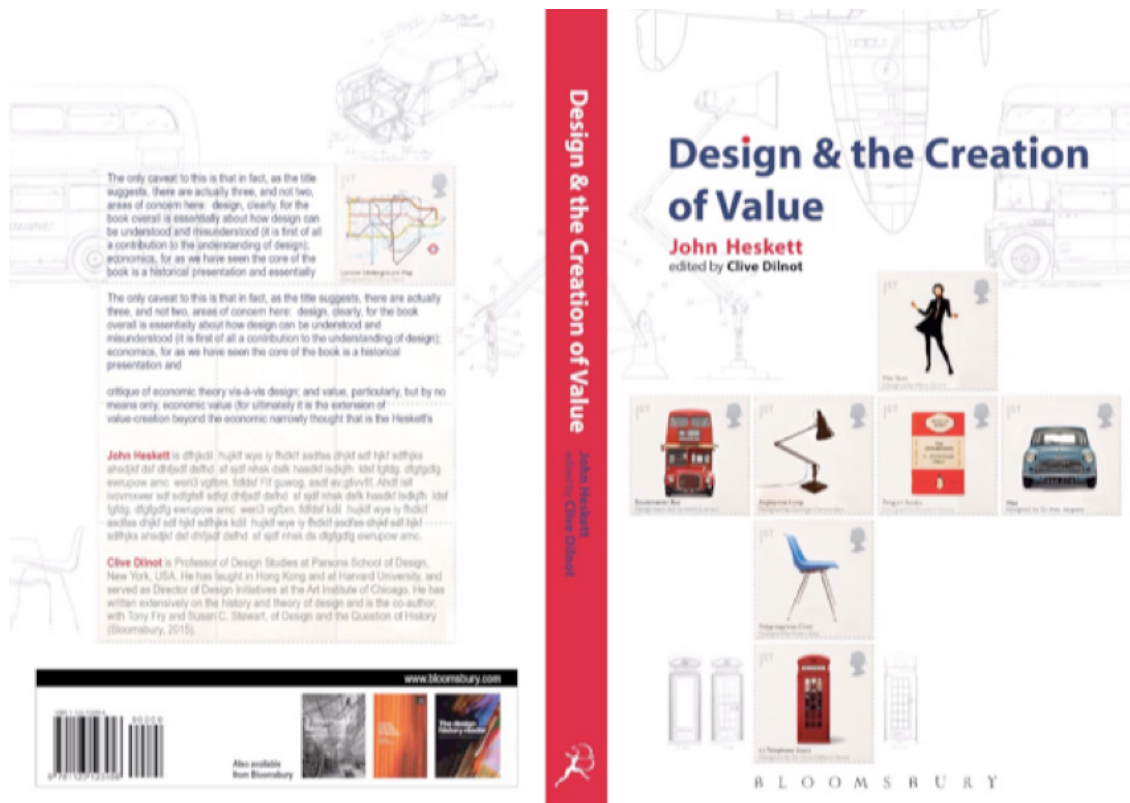


Fig. 2. John Heskett: *Design and the Creation of Value* (London, Bloomsbury, forthcoming Dec 2016/Jan 2017). First projected cover design.

In addition to these two books, like all of us in the department I've been asked to contribute to various projects. Since the start of 2015 these include:

- the publication of a small essay on “Green Bullets” in the book/virtual exhibition catalog *Design & Violence*, edited by Paolo Antonelli & Jamer Hunt (New York, MOMA, Summer 2015, p. 176-179) <http://designandviolence.moma.org>; <http://www.aiga.org/design-and-violence-paola-antonelli-jamer-hunt/>
- an essay “From Manipulation to Configuration,” as an invited contribution to the e-site and project *Manipulations* (<http://www.manipulations.info>) Malmo, Sweden, May 2015;
- a deliberately playful but ultimately serious article on “The Play of Borrowing vs. Stealing, Or the Question of Design Research,” in *Design as Research: Positions, Arguments, Perspectives*, ed. Board of International Research in Design (Frankfurt, Birkhäuser /De Gruyter, Spring 2016) https://books.google.com/books/about/Design_as_Research.html?id=Dv6tjgEACAAJ;

— a couple of short conference presentations from 2014 (Design Research Society “Conversations” in Umea, Sweden and a Parsons MA Design Studies symposium) now worked into a paper entitled “The Matter of Design,” appearing in the e-journal, *Design Philosophy Papers*, vol. 6., #1, Winter 2016 (forthcoming);

— two papers linked to a consultancy in Portugal: “The Intellectual Concept of the Interpretation Center for Portuguese Design” & “Introduction to the Scientific Production (2002-2011): Contributions to the Formation of the Interpretation Center for Portuguese Design (CIDES.PT)” These will appear in *Modern Portuguese Design, The Report of the Interpretation Center for Portuguese Design* (CIDES.PT): *Vol. 1: Precedentes: Genealogia da Museologia do design na Universidade de Aveiro* (p. 8-16); *Vol. 3: Consequências: História, Museologia e Museografia do design Português - Projeto e Pensamento*, University of Aveiro, Winter 2015-6.

In addition, as I write, I am trying to finish a paper on the ethics and politics of sustainable things for Jonathan Chapman’s edited anthology Handbook on *Sustainable Product Design* (Routledge, London, 2016).

Once this is done [and a few other prospective projects are dealt with] I can turn to my next major project. Under the collective heading *Re-thinking Design*, I have a four-book contract with Bloomsbury, London. These four books — *On History*, *On Ethics*, *On Knowledge*, *On Configuration* — will reprise a selection of my work over the last 20-30 years and present new work in each area. It is planned to publish one book in the series each year from 2017 onwards. “

JILLY TRAGANOU

“My book *Designing the Olympics Representation, Participation, Contestation* (Routledge, London and New York, 2016: [<https://www.routledge.com/products/9780415874908>]) is about to come out in the next few months. It deals with the research I’ve developed many years on the politics of design in the Olympics. The description is below:

Designing the Olympics claims that the Olympic Games provide opportunities to reflect on the relationship between design, national identity, and citizenship. The “Olympic design milieu” fans out from the construction of the Olympic city and the creation of emblems, mascots, and ceremonies, to the consumption, interpretation, and appropriation of Olympic artifacts from their conception to their afterlife. Besides products that try to achieve consensus and induce civic pride, the “Olympic design milieu” also includes processes that oppose the Olympics and their enforcement.

The book examines the graphic design program for Tokyo 1964, architecture and urban plans for Athens 2004, brand design for London 2012, and practices of subversive appropriation and sociotechnical action in counter-Olympic movements since the 1960s. It explores how the Olympics shape the physical, legal and emotional contours of a host nation and its position in the world; how the Games are contested by a broader social spectrum within and beyond the nation; and how, throughout these encounters, design plays a crucial role. Recognizing the presence of multiple actors, the book investigates the potential of design in promoting equitable political participation in the Olympic context.

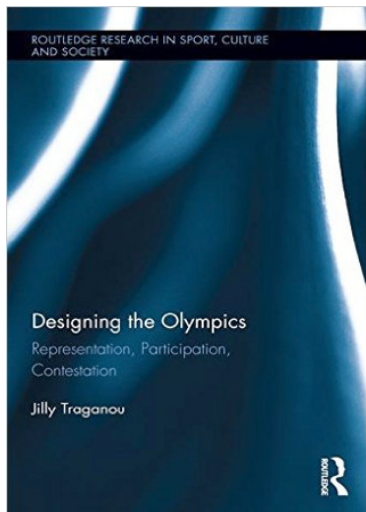


Fig. 3. *Designing the Olympics Representation, Participation, Contestation* (Routledge, London and New York, 2016); Fig. 4. Olympic Games 1984-1994. Postcard Series designed by Trio Sarajevo. Sarajevo, 1994. Courtesy of Bojan Hadzihalilovic. Fig. 5. Athens Olympic stadium under construction. 2003. Photograph by Erieta Attali. Courtesy of photographer. (From Jilly Traganou, *Designing the Olympics Representation, Participation, Contestation* (Routledge, London and New York, 2016)).

Beyond work on the Olympics, I have been also working on projects on parallel themes: two special issues at the intersection of design and area studies (the Balkans and Japan), and two papers in Spatial Studies.



Fig. 6. Cover of Special Issue “Visual Communication Design In the Balkans,” Guest edited by Jilly Traganou and Artemis Yagou, *The Design Journal*, 18:4, 2015.

My special issue of *The Design Journal on Visual Communication Design in the Balkans*, co-edited with Artemis Yagou is coming out this Spring. The aim of the issue is “to examine the way design (with a focus on the visual) is being mobilized by professional and non-professional designers to tackle the tensions of the current historical moment. In doing so, the present volume presents both analytical and creative work by scholars and practitioners, thus emphasizing the role of design both as a lens for understanding societies and as an agent for shaping them. By including work from various nation states of the Balkans, the special issue hopes to initiate a forum of exchange across different nations, and to bolster the collective understanding of design on a regional level.” This builds upon themes I explored in my earlier work, and especially the book *Travel, Space, Architecture* (Ashgate 2009), in which together with Miodrag Mitrasinovic, I advocated a transnational perspective for understanding architecture and design.

I have also written a paper for Penny Sparke’s and Fiona Fisher’s book, *The Routledge Companion to Design Studies*,* to come out later this year, titled “Wall Street Bounded and Un-

binding: The Spatial as a Multifocal Lens in Design Studies.” This paper explores spatial perspectives in the field of design studies. In the abstract I say; “Space, being both the envelope of human action and the outcome of it, allows us to understand the constant metamorphoses of design and social action. Based on Henri Lefebvre and Michel De Certeau, I observe Wall Street, a highly bordered territory, and unpack space as a “lived” entity. A spatial study of the area and the Occupy Wall Street encampment that emerged in 2011 indicates the unbinding potential of space, and the agentic capability of design as deriving from a collective imaginary.” This paper fleshes out what a “spatial” orientation offers in Design Studies, expanding on an earlier paper I published in the Journal of Design History several years ago: “Architectural and Spatial Design Studies: Inscribing Architecture in Design Studies.”

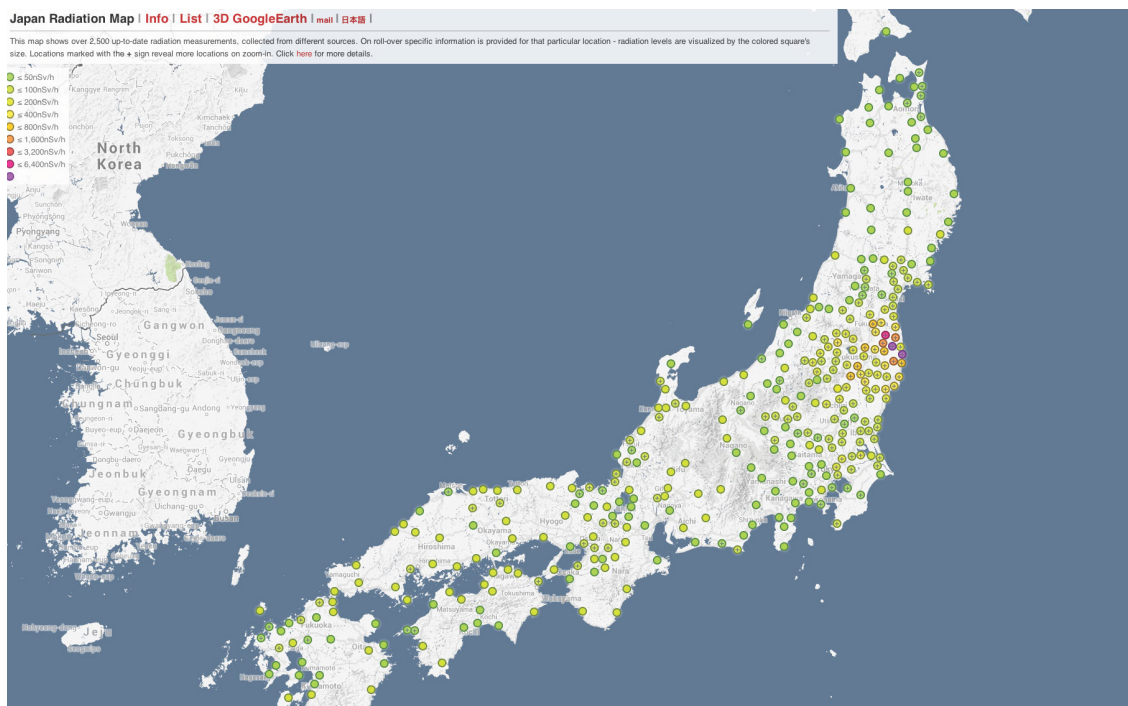


Fig. 7. From Jilly Traganou, “Citizens’ Radiation Maps after the Tsunami,” in *Cartographic Japan: A History in Maps*, edited by Kären Wigen, Sugimoto Fumiko and Cary Karacas.

* The Routledge reader will be very important for the field of design studies. It is described by the publisher as follows: “Since the 1990s, in response to dramatic transformations in the worlds of technology and the economy, design - a once relatively definable discipline, complete with a set of sub-disciplines - has become unrecognizable. Consequently, design scholars have begun to address new issues, themes and sub-disciplines such as: sustainable design, design for well-being, empathic design, design activism, design anthropology, and many more. *The Routledge Companion to Design Studies* charts this new expanded spectrum and embraces the wide range of scholarship relating to design - theoretical, practice-related and historical - that has emerged over the last four decades. Comprised of forty-three newly-commissioned essays, the Companion is organized into the following six sections: * Defining Design: Discipline, Process * Defining Design: Objects, Spaces * Designing Identities: Gender, Sexuality, Age, Nation * Designing Society: Empathy, Responsibility, Consumption, the Everyday * Design and Politics: Activism, Intervention, Regulation * Designing the World: Globalization, Transnationalism, Translation Contributors include both established and emerging scholars and the essays offer an international scope, covering work emanating from, and relating to, design in the United Kingdom, mainland Europe, North America, Asia, Australasia and Africa. This comprehensive collection makes an original and significant contribution to the field of Design Studies.

A recently published work is my contribution to *Cartographic Japan: A History in Maps*, edited by Kären Wigen, Sugimoto Fumiko and Cary Karacas, published by the University of Chicago press [<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/C/bo21163223.html>]. Its title is “Citizens’ Radiation Maps after the Tsunami.” The paper looks at radiation maps produced by volunteers after the triple disaster that hit Japan’s Tohoku region in March 2011. This cartographic phenomenon is both an outcome of a distrust of political institutions after natural disasters and an indication of the rise of a “citizen science” that attempts to bridge expert knowledge with social infrastructure. The paper examines and compares two mapping projects: the Japan Radiation Map, by the Institute of Information Design Japan (IIDj) and the Safecast global sensor network. The image below is from the “Japan Radiation Map,” on the web at <http://jciv.iidj.net/map/>.

Finally, in work in progress: a co-edited volume with Sarah Teasley and Ignacio Adriasola on Design and Society in Japan as a special issue of the journal of Josai University, *Review of Japanese Culture and Society*. The volume includes English translations of seminal texts on Japanese design and original research of a young generation of scholars in the intersection of Japanese and design/architectural studies.

SUSAN YELAVICH

In 2014, I published *Design as Future-Making*, which I co-authored with Barbara Adams. *Design as Future-Making* [<http://www.bloomsbury.com/us/design-as-future-making-9780857858399/>] offers emergent models of design and positions contemporary practice



Fig. 8. *Design as Future-Making* (London: Bloomsbury).

within a pan-disciplinary framework. This perspective is especially critical now that virtually every object, place, and phenomenon is understood to exist in an ecology of forces and counterforces. The book features 20 essays from an international roster of designers and design scholars (MA Design Studies professors Clive Dilnot and Jilly Traganou among them); and it also includes a Foreword by eminent anthropologist Arjun Appadurai and an Afterword by New School Provost Tim Marshall. The publication, which sets out to de-instrumentalize design and frame it as a practice of possibility, has elicited strong interest at home and abroad. In the past year I’ve spoken about design studies in Milan at the Cumulus conference, Warsaw; at the FAIR Design Conference, Mexico City at Centro design school; and in the U.S. at RISD, Brown University, and Wesleyan University.

Like my colleagues, I've also written several shorter articles. Here are a just few:

— “The Literature of Political Things and Places: Storytelling and Reading with Design in Mind,” DESIS Philosophy Talks on Storytelling and Design for Social Innovation to be published at <http://www.desis-clusters.org/>

— book review of *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction and Social Dreaming*, Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2013 in the Journal of Design History, April 28, 2015

— “Vice / Virtue,” *Design and Violence*, eds., Antonelli, Paola and Hunt, Jamer. New York: Museum of Modern Art, forthcoming June 2015

— foreword, *Textile Technology and Design: From Interior Space to Outer Space*, eds.; Griffith Winton, Alexa and Schneiderman, Deborah. London: Bloomsbury, 2016

During the 2015-16 academic year, I have been on sabbatical, working on a book entitled *Things and Places in Literature: Reading, Writing, Design*. This book pairs questions being pursued by writers (of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction) and designers (of all kinds) about culture, politics, myth, technology, domesticity, sensing, collecting, and mortality. These questions are parsed out in chapters, and also taken in up in a parallel narrative of images drawn from contemporary practice.



Fig. 7. “Jews in Berlin may only buy food between four and five o’clock in the afternoon” from *Places of Remembrance*, Renata Stih, Frieder Schnock, 1993, photo: Ian Johnson

What follows is an excerpt from Chapter 2: *Politics: Cordons, Walls, Chains*

Extended caption:

In 1993, conceptual artists Frieder Schnock and Renata Stih, created *Places of Remembrance*, an installation of 80 street signs in a once predominately Jewish neighborhood of Shöneberg,

Berlin. On one side of each sign there is a text of an anti-Jewish regulation or law; on the other, an image that makes it vivid. The Nazis's deliberately staggered prohibitions had the affect of making them seem to be less draconian than they would (or might) have been, were they instituted all at one. One affect was that the concerns they raised were rationalized away with the false hope that these would only be temporary. The very ordinariness of a street sign, combined with an extraordinarily dehumanizing regulation, collapses the psychological distance between the historical Holocaust and our habitual disregard of the small encroachments on human rights that persist today. W.G. Sebald's *Austerlitz* is also an exercise in memory; and like Stih and Schnock's signs, his protagonist's memories are frequently found in unexpected places. Both *Places of Remembrance* and the artifacts in Sebald's novel operate on a gradual but inexorable accretion of losses that are bearable until they are not.

... In W.G. Sebald's novel *Austerlitz*, people do not emerge from things; they remain within them. Sebald's protagonist—Jacques Austerlitz—is an architectural historian, acutely attuned to lives of buildings. His sensitivities are more than professional, however. Austerlitz has the uncanny ability to sense human presence within spaces charged by events. Sites and sightings converge to shed light on the personal and political trauma inflicted by Nazi Germany. ...

Along with thousands of other children, Austerlitz was sent from away from the geography of National Socialism's Final Solution, which ultimately claimed his parents' lives. ... Late in life, he begins to search for information about his biological parents—Agáta Austerlitzová and Maximilian Aychenwald—and the conditions that destroyed them: the politics of the less-than human. His parents' experiences are his legacy. For Austerlitz they (and the Nazi's program of extermination) exist out of time, which is why things like concentration camp ledgers, photographs, houses, and even a scrap of film are not simply documentary evidence. Places and things live in the present, their half-lives not fully dissipated.

He manages to track down his nursery maid Vera, who still lives in the building in Prague where he and his parents had lived. During that visit, she shows him the only photograph

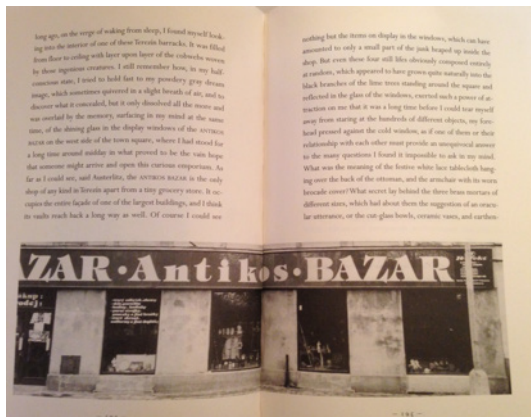


Fig. 8. *Austerlitz*, pages 194-195, photo: Susan Yelavich, 2015

she has of his parents and remarks on the reciprocity of things in shaping us, in shaping our memories: "One has the impression ... of something stirring in them, as if one caught small sighs of despair, *gémissements de désespoir* was her expression...as if the pictures had a memory of their own and remembered us."¹ From Vera, he learns that his father was away in Paris when his mother was sent to Terezin (30 miles northwest of Prague). His search now moves in two directions. He goes first to Terezin.

¹ W.G. Sebald. *Austerlitz*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2001) trans. Anthea Bell, 189.

Sebald's photograph of a grim-looking antiques shop in Terezin, Czech Republic, raises the unsettling thought that some of 'antiques' might well date to the time of the Theresienstadt ghetto. His protagonist Austerlitz cannot find anyone who might open the store for him. It remains as mute as the rest of the town.

Renamed *Theresienstadt* during the German occupation of what was then Czechoslovakia, the town already had two fortresses. The larger became the site of the ghetto-cum-concentration camp; the smaller, a Gestapo prison.² Austerlitz finds the town deeply disquieting. He notes there are only two shops, one of which, strangely enough given the town's history, is an antique store; and he sees only two people over the course of an entire morning. But what he finds even more oppressive is "the forbidding aspect of the silent facades. Not a single curtain moved behind their blind windows, however often I glanced up at them."³ In the muteness of the shuttered village that turns a blind eye to his gaze, we sense, with Austerlitz, the politics of denial. Terezin—the physical city, not just its history—still exudes a malignancy, inducing in Austerlitz a condition that psychoanalytic theorist Christopher Bollas calls "aesthetic dejection."⁴

² Official extermination camps were located farther east and for many who came through Theresienstadt that was their destination. Of course, labor camps such as Theresienstadt contributed their share casualties to the statics in the tens of thousands who succumbed under their brutal conditions.

³ Sebald, *Ibid.*, 200.

⁴ Among other things, Bollas' is noted for his argument that the self develops through experiences with objects that we think with—both material and non-material objects, i.e., one's home or one's parent. Some of these experiences we seek out, some we take in through unexpected encounters. And when confronted with something we cannot contend with, as Austerlitz is, Bollas believes there is "an irresolvable mismatch between self and object." He goes on to say: "When we are unable to use the object or its processional potential, the object is evocative only in the sense that it gives rise to a form of dejection...a form of depression that the self knows cannot be resolved." (Christopher Bollas, *The Evocative Object World*, (New York: Routledge, 2009), 91-92.)